

# MERCATOR:

O R,

## Commerce Retrieved,

B E I N G

CONSIDERATIONS on the State of the *British Trade*, &c.

From Tuesday, March 9. to Thursday, March 11. 1713.

*The Opposers Assertion, that if the Treaty of Commerce with France be made Effectual, our Trade to Portugal will be lost, deservedly Exposed.*

*Their Arguments for this Absurdity sum'd up.*

*These Clamours raised only by the Traders to Portugal, who seek to Monopolize the Wine-Trade, and are afraid of an Extended Commerce.*

*This a base private Spirit to the Prejudice of their own Country.*

*Many of them Foreigners, who consequently care not for the publick Advantage.*

*A Scheme of our Exportation to Portugal, Anno 1684.*

*They are desired to tell what we Imported that Year, to Ballance such an Exportation.*

**T**HE *MERCATOR* has now proved,  
1. That altho' the Trade to Portugal be exceeding great; yet that it is nothing near so great as the Opposers of the Treaty of Commerce with France have Suggested it to be. And  
2. That what Encrease there has been, has not been the Consequence of, or produced by the Treaty made by Mr. Methven in 1703. but has another visible Cause to be assign'd to it, and this Cause is the Encrease of the Brasil Trade.

The present thing to be spoken to is the Absurdity of that Notion which so much Noise has been made of, viz. that if the Treaty with France should be made effectual, our Trade with Portugal will be lost.

This is the Inference drawn from all that the Opposers say in this Case, and this is that with which they alarm and amuse the deceived People, and it is upon this Supposition, that *as we know* they are preparing Petitions, and have sent them into the Country ready drawn for the poor Country Clothiers, by an implicit Blackwel-hall Faith, to sign and send up, as if it was the real Complaint of the Country Manufacturers.

This is all which they think of Weight to build the Party-clamour they are making upon: If then this should be proved to be a Chimera, all their Delusions abovesaid must fall to the Ground with it. To set this in a true Light, the *MERCATOR* shall first give the State of the Objection, as they really form it, as follows.

They alledge, " That upon Mr. Methven's Treaty, " England having agreed, that the French Wines shall always pay in England one third Duty more than the " Portuguese, and that upon this Condition the Portuguese were content to take off the Prohibition in " Portugal upon some of our Woollen Manufactures: " That therefore, as soon as we shall make a Convention of this Convention, and shall admit the " French Wines into England at a lower Duty, &c. " that then the Portuguese will prohibit all our Woollen Manufactures, yea, and break with us also.

This is a fair Deduction of what these People have alledged, if there be any Error in it, it is that it may not say so much of it as they say.

It is true, and it may very properly be observed here, that the People who make these Objections are originally Portugal Merchants and Traders; and of whom, considering, as in our last, like the Silver-smiths in Ephesus their Shrine-making is the Case, and their Craft is in danger, nothing better could be expected; and for this Reason it is not to be wonder'd at in them. They are, no doubt, very willing to make the Wine Trade a Monopoly, as far as lies in them, and that particularly in the Article of Portugal Wine.

But it is hoped we have other Branches of Commerce to be taken care of, and they are ill Parents who starve some of their Children to feed the rest. And

It is certain in the first Place, that before the War, and when as these Men alledge the Quantity of French Wine was so very great in England, The Portugal Wine Imported, paid more Duty than the French Wines by 8l. 10s. 0d. per Ton, or thereabout; and yet at that time this was thought to be no Encroachment on the Portugal Trade, nor was it any Obstruction then to the Exportation of our Manufactures to Portugal, which were sent then to Portugal in very large Quantities.

So that this Treaty puts the Portuguese in a much better Condition than they were in before the War, and yet in that time we drove a very great and a very profitable Trade to Portugal, and in spite of all these Men pretend to. The *MERCATOR* says the Custom-house Books which are right in this Trade, will make it appear, that we had even then a great Ballance in our Favour, and under that Difference, yet then the Trade to Brasils began to Encrease.

If then the Brasil Trade, and consequently the whole Trade to Portugal began to Encrease and Improve, when we, as it were, excluded their Wines, by making them pay 8l. 10s. per Ton MORE for Custom than the French. Why must we be afraid that all our Trade with Portugal should be lost upon bringing them to a Par?

It does not seem rational on either side, for if we gain'd upon the Trade under that Discouragement, why should we lose the Trade, by bringing them to an Equality?



Equality? The Case is clear, that we Traded with Portugal with such Goods as they want, and cannot be without, nor will the Portuguese want our Correspondence and our Manufactures for twice the Value of all the Wines which we take of them.

If the Portuguese did not find our Trade both Necessary and Profitable to them, why did they Trade with us when we kept their Wines under such universal Discouragement as to make them pay 8 l. per Ton more Duties than the French Wines? And why is bringing them down to a PAR with the French, now counted a Hardship, when the giving the French the Advantage was no Hardship before? But there are some People, who if you give them an Inch, will have the Modesty to crave an Ell.

Besides all this, let us enquire what preference to other Nations do we enjoy in Portugal: Do we pay less than the French in Portugal, why then should the Portuguese pay less than the French here?

It is well known, we pay greater Duties in Portugal for our Woollen Manufactures than we pay in any Nation in Christendom, and that by a great deal; and if there is any Customary abatement it is *First*, Arbitrary; *Secondly*, Uncertain; And, *Thirdly*, It does not Reduce us so low, but we pay, I say, after those abatements, more Duty than we pay in any Port or Kingdom in Christendom upon the same Goods. These are Considerations that might weigh with any Men but Portugal Merchants, and Party-Men, join'd together. But of that hereafter.

To Return to the Trade of our Manufactures to Portugal before the War; The *MERCATOR* says, that notwithstanding that we took not above 4 or 500 Ton of Wines a Year of them, and that we kept up an extravagant Duty upon their Wines here, to their effectual Discouragement, yet the *MERCATOR* has seen a Scheme or Draught from the Custom-house of the Exportation of Woollen Goods to Portugal in the Year 1684, of which this is the Copy as follows, which, if it be right, will Confute all that these People have offered upon the Subject.

*An Account of Woollen Goods Exported from England to Portugal, from Christmas, 1683, to Christmas 1684; as follows,*

Bays Voc.	Double	—	—	6728 Pieces
	Minikin	—	—	5439
Bays Voc.	Single	—	—	1673
	Barnstaple	—	—	117
Cloths Vocat.	Broad	—	—	153
	Long	—	—	2634
Cloths Vocat.	Short	—	—	1927
	Spanish	—	—	3466
Cloths Vocat.	Yorkshire dozens	—	—	2072
	Kerfies	—	—	1763
Cloths Vocat.	Cloth Lists	—	—	11060 Yards
	Rafhes	—	—	139



Cottons per Goad	—	—	6845 Goads
Plains	—	—	8437
Flannel per Yard	—	—	19272
Frize	—	—	5397
Stocking Woasted and Woollen	—	—	37879 doz.
Perpets and Serges	—	—	485297 l.
Stuffs and Says	—	—	168235 l.
Stuffs with Silk	—	—	4235 l.
Hats Felt	—	—	609 doz.
Ditto Castors	—	—	413 doz.
Devon Dozens	—	—	1017
Rugs and Blankets ad Valorem	—	—	l. 116: 13s: 10d.

This Account extends only to Woollen Manufactures; other Goods were sent in great Quantities.

If this Account be Right, or near Right, which the *MERCATOR* has very good Reason to believe, tho' he does not, like these Men, Vouch and Affirm it, Right or Wrong; But if it be Right, the *MERCATOR* desires the Opposers, for the Satisfaction of the Publick, and in Defence of their own Assertion, (viz.) That we had no Ballance before the War in our Trade to Portugal; to tell the World what Goods we received from Portugal in that Year to Ballance the Account of our Manufactures which we sent thither: This they ought to do, or fairly to acknowledge that they have Imposed upon the World.

In short; The *MERCATOR* affirms, and has sufficiently proved, that to say we had no Ballance on our Side in our Trade to Portugal before the War, is to say what is *false*.

To say that we had no Ballance, as above, before the late Treaty with Portugal, is to say what is *false*.

To say that the late Treaty is the occasion of the Encrease of the Trade to Portugal, is to say what is *false*.

To say that by any Contravention of that Treaty we shall lose the Portugal Trade, or any part of it, is to say what there is no ground for, and is therefore *false*.

*ERRATA in the last.*

Col. 1. line 22. for *know* read *known*. Col. 2. lin. 17. for *it is not* read *is it not*. Ibid. lin. 22. for *it is not* read *is it not*. Ibid. lin. 21. after *lies* place (?) Ibid. lin. 28, after *World* place (?) Col. 3. lin. 35. for *made, from* read *made; (viz.) from*. Ibid. lin. 37. for *Out-Port* read *Out-Ports*. Ibid. lin. 38. after 8703 read *Tons*. Col. 4. lin. 14. for *but* read *yet*. Ibid. lin. 20. dele *yet*.